

## Meaningful Work:

Connecting With Our Most Challenging Students

Welcome to Meaningful Work. I am Kim Marcum.

- Please turn off your cell phone unless, you are waiting to hear from the state lottery board, because you have the winning ticket!
- Please make yourself comfortable and get ready for a session that has the potential to change student's lives!

## Session Workshop

- Learn the elements involved in setting up a successful Meaningful Work Program.
- Learn why Meaningful Work is successful with challenging students.
- Share ideas for jobs that can be implemented in your school.

#### WHAT IS MEANINGFUL WORK?

Jobs which are thoughtfully assigned and consistently carried out by students on a regular basis as an integral part of a positive discipline system

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

#### How we started

- At risk students were disciplined with traditional methods
- Rate of repeat offenders was high
- Negative interaction with parents was high
- Students resented discipline and didn't own their problems
- IT DIDN'T WORK VERY WELL!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

#### What it looks like now...

- Students check job postings and apply for positions
- Students are doing meaningful jobs throughout the school
- Adults mentor, give feedback and value student contributions
- Students participate in problem solving sessions, set goals and celebrate successes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Job Posting Board



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What it looks like now...

- Inappropriate behavior has drastically decreased
- Parents are proud of the children's contributions
- Staff are able to have positive interactions with all kids

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Who is Meaningful Work Designed for?

- At risk students who are in need of attention.
- Students who demonstrate challenging behaviors.
- Students who are in crisis.
- Well behaved students who can serve as good role models and give the program credibility.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Jobs

- Salad bar supervisor
- Answering machine recorder
- Video production staff
- Germ buster
- Work room assistant



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## And More Jobs

- Audiologist assistant
- Animal tender
- Preschool assistant
- Playground equipment distributor



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Questions To Ask When You Create Jobs

- Does it have visibility?
- Is it consistently available?
- Is there enough contact with a reinforcing adult?
- Does it have value to the staff or school?
  - Lost and found manager
  - Kindergarten bundler

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Prepare to Take Action!

- With a partner generate at least three jobs that could be used in your school that have not already been addressed. You will have five minutes to accomplish this task. If you finish before the timer goes off, don't stop, expand your list of jobs. Be prepared to share your jobs when the timer goes off.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Time is Up!

- Choose a recorder who will be responsible for writing your jobs on your paper.
- Partners share your list with the other partners at your table.
- When your list is complete determine which categories are represented by the job and place the appropriate dot/dots next to the job.
  - High visibility – Red dot
  - Consistently available – Yellow dot
  - Contact with a reinforcing adult – Green dot
  - Job includes an opportunity to move – Blue dot

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Post Your Job Charts on the Wall

- Take the next few minutes to walk around the room and record any jobs that you might use in your school.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## And More Jobs



- Custodial assistant
- Workroom assistant
- P. E. assistant
- Computer technician
- Fire drill assistant
- Thank you/birthday card artist
- Birthday card manager

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## SELECTING SUPERVISORS

- At first the principal supervised
- Brainstorm possible people who might nurture students
  - Are there some parts of their jobs that students can help them with?
- Consistency is important-when kids are ready to do the job someone needs to be ready to supervise
- Will they treat students as professionals?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What Does The Supervisor Do?

- Teaches basic job skills
  - All skills and tasks related to the job need to be taught
- Nurtures the student's self confidence in the job
- Acts as a goad and lets the child know they believe in them
- Monitors job performance
- Tells staff meeting leader what skills need to be worked on

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The Grandma Viv Model

- As students are working on their jobs with their supervising mentor comfortable conversation takes place.
- Mentors learn more about their student worker and students learn positive life lessons.
- Good mentors develop healthy, positive relationships with their student workers.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Common Paradigms: Developing Healthy Relationships

#### Paradigm 1:

- **Think**
- **Feel**
- **Exist**

You care about a student's thoughts, feelings, and their presence, and your relationship is based on these things, not just on the student's actions

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Common Paradigms: Developing Healthy Relationships

#### Paradigm 2: Sponsor, Positive Goad, Supporter, Coach

When trying to foster resilience, independence and efficacy a person needs to have these four influences in his or her life.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### A sponsor

This is a person who helps introduce and promote a person's involvement in activities and healthy relationships.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### A positive goad

This person gives the message, "You can do it." Whatever the "it" is. Students who do not believe in themselves but trust you can reach beyond their self-imposed limits and try things they can do, but believe they cannot.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### A Supporter

This is the person who picks you up when you are down. We all have someone we can turn to who we believe cares about what we think and feel and cares that we are a part of their world.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## The Coach

This is the person who tells you how to, when to, and with whom to. The coach also gives real-time feedback. The coach can push a student beyond self-imposed limits.

It is important to keep in mind that you can only effectively coach when you have a player who wants to play. Therefore, coaching frequently follows being a sponsor and positive goad.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Reflect

- Think about a person in your life that served as either your goad, sponsor, supporter, or coach. What were the characteristics of this person that made you connect positively with them?
- Jot down one or two characteristics.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Common Paradigms: Developing Healthy Relationships

### Paradigm 3: Listening and Hearing

- Barriers can be caused by unintentionally poor listening.
- Good listening is a non-verbal action and is best demonstrated through eye contact, body language, and expression.
- The more you talk, the less you can listen.
- Ask a question, be quiet, and listen.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Take Action!

- Make a list of staff members who may have some parts of their jobs that students can help them with?
- Think about those who would make good mentors.
- Note, they do not have to be a warm fuzzy person to be a good supervising mentor.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Suggested supervisors

- |                             |                                  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Custodians                | • The Principal                  |
| • Secretaries               | • Classroom Teacher              |
| • Media specialists         | • Preschool Teacher              |
| • Production room Assistant | • Recess Assistants              |
| • P.E. Teacher              | • Cross-age Tutoring Coordinator |
| • Cooks                     | • Adult Crossing Guards          |
| • Technology coordinator    | • Parent Volunteers              |

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## And More Jobs



- software loader
- milk salesperson
- cameraman
- delivery person
- kindergarten bus greeter
- speech pass deliverer

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Why Does It Work?

- ATTENTION
  - Many kids going through divorce and life changes and their attention needs aren't being met
  - Efficiency ways to gain 1:1 attention
  - Consistent job provides consistent attention

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Why Does It Work?

- STIMULATION
  - The group approach required by classroom size often does not allow enough stimulation. Disruptive behavior does.
  - Creating situations where teacher and classmates become agitated can be both stimulating and easy to accomplish
  - A job provides both stimulation and a reason not to agitate others

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Why Does It Work?

- NURTURING
  - Children need nurturing and when it is not present they become chaotic, usually without knowing why
  - A job supervisor can often provide consistent, specific and even gender-specific nurturing

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Why Does It Work?

- ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- Students need unconditional acknowledgment, not tied to how a student performs or behaves
- A job gives an opportunity to value a student without tying it directly to performance
- Statements such as “You make a difference” provide acknowledgment

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- “Students function more effectively when they feel respected and valued and function poorly when they feel disrespected and marginalized.” (National Research Council, 2004, Ryan & Deci)
- Stipek, Deborah. (September 2006) Relationships. *Educational Leadership*(pp. 46-49).

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- “The entire sum of existence is the magic of being needed by just one person.”

Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Why Does It Work?

- PURPOSE
  - Everyone needs to wake up in the morning and feel as if they have a purpose for going into the day
  - Academics do not provide that purpose for many students
  - A job gives student a sense of purpose

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Why Does It Work?

- BELONGING
  - Students may feel alienated from school due to peer problems, shyness or poor social skills
  - Students who move frequently may be disconnected
  - Students whose parent resent school may not feel a part of the school]
  - Jobs engage students as members of the community and give an opportunity for friendships to develop

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Why Does It Work?

- CHANGE
  - Everyone occasionally needs a change from routine
  - Jobs provide a break for both the teacher and the student
  - Twenty minutes away from the classroom can provide students and teacher with a fresh start
- **Please take 5 minutes to consider some students in your school who might have some of these unmet needs and describe them to others at your table**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Reinforcing Workers

- No tangible pay
- Praise
- Overheard praise
- Employee of the week
- Public acknowledgment

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## And More Jobs...

- Worker of the week supervisor
- Assembly set up crew



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Jobs With A Community Connection...



- Bank teller
- Flag raiser
- Newsletter editor

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## STUDENT SELECTION

- A cross section is important
  - We have lots of businesses that employ low need kids
    - school store, bank, book trading company, latte business, tour guides, popcorn sales
- Match kids to jobs
  - late kid=flag raiser or door opener
  - high attention need kid=fire drill assistant
  - student needing math practice tutors at much younger age level

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Take Action!

- Think of three students with behavior challenges you would consider for a job.
- Using the lists you generated, match your students to a job.
- Think of two high level students that would make good role models in a Meaningful Work program and consider jobs you would assign them.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## The Good Enough Staff Meeting

- Can be run by a para-pro
- Meet with groups of workers quarterly
- Discuss what's working on the job and solicit suggestions for improving the jobs
- Ask for ideas for new jobs
- Share a small snack

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The Better Staff Meeting

- Can be run by a para pro
- Monthly job alike meetings with small groups of workers
  - For example all lunch workers
- Share what is working on the job and what is not working

Students share how to improve the job

- Set generic work goals
  - This month we will be working making positive connections with our customers.
  - This month we are setting a goal of improving our healthy food handling practices.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The Best Staff Meeting

- Monthly meeting run by a school counselor
- Small groups of workers with specific social skill needs, but also included in the group are high functioning role models
- Share what's working on the job and what is not working
- Students discuss how to improve the job
- Social skill taught in context of the job and tailored to student needs
  - Lets explore how we can handle conflict on the job.
  - Goals reflect what has been taught

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### How to give positive corrections

- Kids need to learn job behaviors, they aren't naturally going to have them
- Corrections should include solutions, not just shortcomings

"You do an excellent job of sorting mail. One thing that would make you even better is to make sure no teacher is getting the same mail twice"

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



### When To Change Jobs

- Student input is important
- Listen at staff meetings to pick up on potential problems
- Try to find the problem- too little reinforcement, missing an interesting activity at that time, not enough adult contact?
- If it can 't be fixed, change quickly before the situation deteriorates

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### How to shoot yourself in the foot!

- Take away the job as a form of punishment. **Bang!!!**
- Don' t let the student do the job unless they have all of their work done. **Bang!!**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Disciplining Misbehavior

- Rarely does discipline include losing ones job.
- When a student must miss a job, get them back on immediately.
- If a student must change jobs because of behavior ( For example, stealing money from the cash box.) place them in a more appropriate job as soon as they have made restitution.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

- Meaningful Work can be purchased on the Safe & Civil School Website
- [safe&civilschools.com](http://safe&civilschools.com)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---